DOCUMENT RESUME

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ABSTRACT

These activities are intended to acquaint elementary students with the voting process. Students in grades K-4 are introduced to vocabulary concerning voting through games and classroom discussions. A voting area is simulated in the classroom. Students are given the opportunity to vote for their favorite dog, bird, and wild animal. So that they can compare candidates within each category, students are given charts describing characteristics of various dogs, birds, and wild animals. Pre-election day activities include discussions of the candidates, making clay figures of the candidates, and having each child tell why he or she thinks his or her favorite is the best. Students are made acquainted with the concept of voter qualification through classroom discussions. Students are also introduced to voting procedures, e.g., students make signs to be used in and around the polling place, and they make badges for the election judges to wear on election day. Many student handouts concerning voting that can be used in the activities are included in the publication, e.g., a connect-the-dots picture of a boy voting, a find-the-way to the polling place maze, crossword puzzles, and pictures of the candidates to color. (RM)

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

LET'S VOTE!

☐ CARDINAL	☐ FOX	☐ POODLE
☐ HUMMINGBIRD	☐ OPOSSUM	☐ SAINT BERNARD
☐ WOODPECKER	☐ DEER	☐ BEAGLE
☐ BLUE JAY	☐ SQUIRREL	☐ COLLIE

☐ CARDINAL	☐ FOX	☐ POODLE
☐ HUMMINGBIRD	☐ OPOSSUM	☐ SAINT BERNARD
☐ WOODPECKER	☐ DEER	☐ BEAGLE
☐ BLUE JAY	☐ SQUIRREL	☐ COLLIE

SP 016 705

PREFACE

The fundamental right of voting is inherent in our form of government – it is indeed the cornerstone of our republic. Developing an appreciation of this right is important in developing responsible citizens. Through this election-education program, the State Board of Elections and the State Board of Education are striving to expand the appreciation of the right to vote in young people and to acquaint them with the electoral process.

This program teaches boys and girls that the vote is their voice in a democracy. They are given an opportunity to experience how campaigning influences the voter; to speak out for the candidates of their choice; to vote on a paper ballot; and to realize the importance of voting in secret. The program brings real-life situations of adulthood into the classroom. It is designed to provide challenges and opportunities for success for all children, including those at both ends of the learning spectrum.

The materials provided to implement this program include:

1. background information for the teacher;
2. step-by-step procedures for conducting the election;
3. a ballot, and
4. a variety of related pupil activities.

We hope that you find this election-education program suitable for use in your classroom. An evalution questionnaire has been provided for your comments.Please return it to the State Board of Elections following your election program.

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

IMPORTANT: We would appreciate it if you would complete this questionnaire and return it at your earliest convenience following the Mock Election.

Return to:

STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS
1020 South Spring Street
P.O. Box 4187
Springfield, Illinois 62704
Attn: Don Schultz

Teacher's Name _____ Number of children participating _____
School Address _____ Grade level of students _____
_____
_____

Evaluate the Mock Election materials.

	Excellent	Very Good	Adequate	Unnecessary
Background Information	_____	_____	_____	_____
Teacher's Procedures	_____	_____	_____	_____
Related Activities	_____	_____	_____	_____

Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Answer the following:	Yes	No
Was the Mock Election a worthwhile learning experience?	_____	_____
Were these materials helpful?	_____	_____
Were the materials organized in a helpful manner?	_____	_____
Were the related activities appropriate?	_____	_____
Would you conduct a mock election again?	_____	_____

Suggestions: _____
_____
_____
_____

LET'S VOTE!

PREPARED BY THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS
IN COOPERATION WITH THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

TEACHER'S BACKGROUND

The first three words of the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States, "We, the people. . . ," is evidence that the power to govern in the United States lies with "the people." This power to govern is exercised, either directly or indirectly, through our right to vote. Voting is our way of making decisions, of speaking out to express our opinion on issues, and of expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with public officials.

The methods used to vote are many. The oldest and most common form of voting is the "voice vote." This method was used in the early American colonies in the 1700's and is used today by civic organizations, clubs and in classrooms. In this method the voter simply responds aloud with the appropriate "aye" or "nay," "yes" or "no" to the issue to be voted upon. This method has one important drawback – it does not provide for secrecy.

Voting in secret is necessary to protect the voter from undue influence, persuasion, coercion, and bribery when voting. It protects the voter's right to express his or her own opinion.

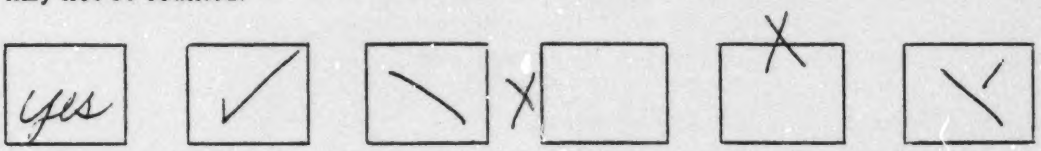
Another old, popular method of voting requires that each voter be given two balls, one black and the other white. The black ball signifies a "no" vote and the white ball signifies a "yes" vote. The voter simply drops the appropriate ball into a container in order to vote. This method is the origin of the expression "to blackball" meaning "to vote against." While providing for secrecy, this method of voting allows for only "yes" or "no" votes and can be quite cumbersome if there are a number of issues to be voted upon.

The method of voting used in Illinois today is derived from the Australian Ballot System. To vote under this system, the voter marks a uniform ballot while alone in a screened booth. If paper ballots are being used, the following security steps are required:

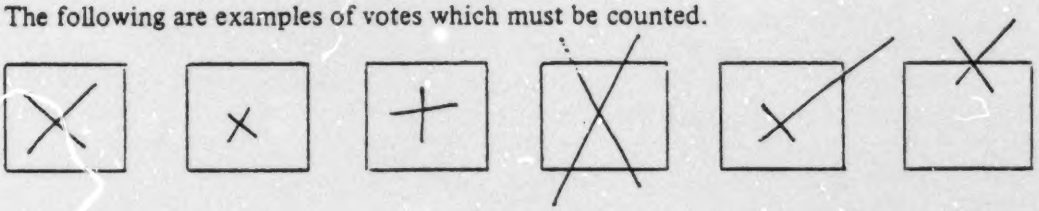
1. that the ballots be uniform in paper quality, size, color, and inking, to ensure that one person's ballot cannot be singled out to determine how he or she voted;
2. that the ballots be printed at public expense and not by private individuals;
3. that the names of all candidates for the same office be on the same ballot to ensure that everyone is selecting from the same list of candidates;
4. that the ballots not be distributed until election day, and then only distributed in the polling place by the judges of election;
5. that there be absolute secrecy in voting; and
6. that only official ballots be counted.

Besides voting on paper ballots, people in Illinois vote on lever-type machines, electronic machines, and punch-card voting devices. Regardless of the device used, the secrecy of the vote must be ensured.

A paper ballot has been provided for your use in this election-education program. A vote is cast on a paper ballot by marking a cross (X) in the square before the name of the individual candidates. A "cross" is the intersection of two lines and unless the lines of the cross intersect within the square, the vote may not be counted. Below are examples of votes which may not be counted.



The following are examples of votes which must be counted.



Any voter may vote for a candidate of his or her choice whose name does not appear on the ballot by writing the name of the candidate on the ballot in the proper place, making a square before the name and placing a cross in that square. On the ballot supplied in this packet, the eagle and the rabbit were intentionally omitted as candidates. As these are two animals popular with children, you may wish to suggest them as possible write-in candidates.

Through the years voter qualifications have varied. In most American colonies only male landowners were permitted to vote. As states were established, each state set the qualifications of the voters in that state. Needless to say, voter qualifications varied from state to state. Women, black citizens, non-landowners, children and illiterates were usually prohibited from voting. It was not until the passage of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution that black men were given the right to vote. Women had to wait until 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment to be granted this right. The 26th Amendment, passed in 1971, lowered the voting age from 21 years to 18 years. Each of these changes came after years of struggle and were fought for by people who cherished the right to vote.

In Illinois every person who is a citizen of the United States, a resident of a county precinct for 30 days and at least 18 years old may register to vote. A person must be registered in order to vote in a general election in Illinois. Registration is one method of ensuring that only qualified persons are permitted to vote.

In every general election it is the duty of the judges of election in each polling place to ensure that every person who has the right to vote has an opportunity to vote and that no one is permitted to vote who does not have the right. These judges are appointed officers of the court for election day.

Once the votes are cast, the judges of election count, or tally, the votes. As each vote is read aloud, a mark is put on the tally sheet after the candidate's name receiving the vote. Tally marks are grouped in sets of five for easy counting.

OFFICE	CANDIDATE	TALLIES 5	10	15	20	TOTAL NO. OF VOTES
FAVORITE DOG	SAINT BERNARD	𝍸	𝍸	I		11
	COLLIE	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	II	17
	BEAGLE	𝍸	III			8
	POODLE	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	IIII	19

These tally sheets serve as a record of the election and must be certified by each of the judges of election.

With the right to vote, the voter has a responsibility to become familiar with the qualifications of each candidate. Political campaigning plays an important role in the election process in helping voters learn about the candidates and the issues. However, there may be no political campaigning, called "electioneering," within the polling place on election day. Electioneering on election day is also prohibited within 100 feet of the polling place. The following comparisons of the candidates in the proposed election will help you familiarize the pupils with the candidates.

Comparision of Candidates For Favorite Dog

CANDIDATE	COLOR	AVERAGE SIZE	INTERESTING FACTS
BEAGLE	smooth coat of white hair with large black and tan patches	13" - 15" high: 18 - 30 pounds	has long drooping ears; is a hunting dog
COLLIE	long hair of brown & white black. white & tan, gray or all white	22" high; 50 - 75 pounds	first bred to care for sheep; helps in farm work
SAINT BERNARD	reddish brown & white with some black on head	25" - 28" high; 165-180 pounds	originally trained to rescue people lost in snowstorms
POODLE	white, black gray, blue, brown, or apricot	*TOY:* under 10" *MINIATURE:* over 10", under 15" *STANDARD:* over 15"; 7-55 pounds	once used as a hunter; has frizzy hair with a top knot

Comparison of Candidates For Favorite Bird

CANDIDATE	COLOR	AVERAGE SIZE	FOOD	INTERESTING FACTS
BLUE JAY	blue varied with white	12" long	seeds, fruit, caterpillars, eggs and young of others	has a loud, harsh voice mixing melodious with rasping shrieks sounding like "thief, thief"
CARDINAL	Male: red with black on throat	7" - 9" long	seeds, fruit, insects, worms	is also called a "redbird," is a song bird with a clear ringing whistle; is the official bird of Illinois
HUMMING-BIRD	jeweled colored, metallic green	3" - 4" long	nectar, small insects	wings move 60-70 times per second making a whirring or humming sound from which it gets its name; is able to fly forward, backward, up and down like a helicopter
WOOD--PECKER	spotted black and white or brown and black	10" - 20" long	insects, seeds	bores holes in trees with its chisel-like beak; its long tongue reaches far into holes to eat insects

Comparison of Candidates For Favorite Wild Animal

CANDIDATE	COLOR	AVERAGE SIZE	FOOD	NUMBER of YOUNG	INTERESTING FACTS
FOX	gray or reddish brown	23"-27"long with 14"-16" tail; 8-11 pounds	small animals	3-7	has keen hearing and excellent sense of smell; fur is used for coats
DEER (white tail)	red-brown in summer; blue gray in winter	3½' high 200 pounds	berries, twigs, vegetables	5-20	can leap 15-20 feet; can run 40 miles per hour; the only animal with "antlers" is used as food by man
OPOSSUM	rough grayish white hair	12"-20" long with a 10"-21" tail	small animals, vegetables	5-20	female has pouch in which young are carried; pretends to be dead when trapped; hangs upside down from tree; fur is used for coats
SQUIRREL	gray, brown reddish or black	16"-24" long ¾ - 1½ pounds	nuts, seeds, berries birds' eggs	2-5	lives in trees or on the ground; stores nuts and seeds for winter; fur used for coats

TEACHER'S PROCEDURES

I. PRE–ELECTION DAY PROCEDURES

A. Materials - - Organize the following in preparation for election day.

1. One ballot per pupil. Duplicate these from the ballot included in the packet.

2. Signs to be posted around the polling place, such as "Vote Here," "Polling Place" and "Ballot Box." Duplicate these from the materials included in the packet or see Related Activity I, D-4, page *11*.

3. One large box or container with a removable lid to serve as the ballot box. The lid should have a slot in the top to fit the voted ballots.

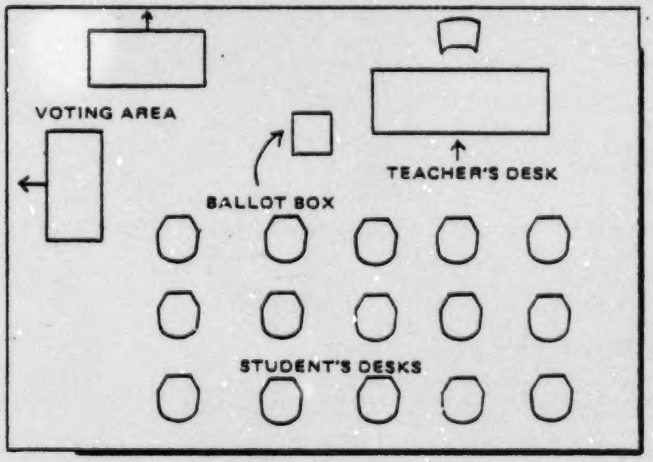
4. Two desks or tables to serve as voting booths. Cardboard screens may be used to complete the booths.

5. Pencils to mark the ballots.

B. Polling Place Arrangement

1. The voting area should be isolated to ensure the secrecy of the vote.

2. The two stations for voting should face separate walls.



SUGGESTED ARRANGEMENT

C. Voter Qualifications - - Set voter qualifications for your classroom. See Related Activities Section I, C, page *11*.

D. Judges of Election - - At least 5 judges are required for a general election. See Related Activity I, D-2, page *11* . In this election the class may act as the fifth judge to observe the tallying procedure.

E. Voting Instructions

1. Acquaint the boys and girls with the ballot. Explain that they should vote for (a) their favorite bird, (b) their favorite wild animal, and (c) their favorite dog. See Related Activities I, B, page *10* .

2. Show the class how to mark the ballot by crossing two lines (X) in the box in front of their selection. Explain that only correctly marked votes may be counted.

3. Explain where to write-in the name of the candidate of their choice if it is not already printed on the ballot.

4. Emphasize that each voter should vote for only one candidate in each group.

5. After the ballot is marked, explain that it must be folded to ensure secrecy and handed to the judge of election to be inserted into the ballot box.

II. ELECTION DAY PROCEDURES

A. Conducting the Election

1. At the given time a judge of election announces that the polls are now open and shows the class that the ballot box is empty.

2. As the class is engaged in other election related activities, each qualified voter obtains a ballot from a judge of election, marks it in secret in the voting area, folds the ballot and returns it to the judge to be inserted into the ballot box. See Related Activities II, B, page *12* from class activities.

B. Closing the Polling Place

1. After all qualified voters have voted, a judge of election announces that the polls are closed.

2. Two other judges open the ballot box, unfold the ballots, and read aloud the properly marked ballots.

3. The fourth judge, with the class looking on as the fifth judge, tallies the votes on the chalkboard. See Teacher's Background, page *3* .

RELATED ACTIVITIES

I. PRE-ELECTION DAY ACTIVITIES

A. Vocabulary Activities - - To encourage the boys and girls to learn and to use election-related words.

1. Encourage the boys and girls to explain the meaning of the following terms in their own words:

(a) VOTE – a choice expressed by written ballot, voice, show of hands, etc.

(b) VOTER – a person who votes.

(c) QUALIFICATIONS TO VOTE – requirements people must meet before being allowed to vote.

(d) BALLOT – list of candidates' names.

(e) CAST A BALLOT – vote.

(f) BALLOT BOX – container where ballots are placed after voting.

(g) ELECT – choose.

(h) ELECTION – process of choosing a candidate by voting.

(i) POLLS or POLLING PLACE – place where election is held.

(j) VOTING BOOTH – enclosure where voters can vote in secret.

(k) CANDIDATE – person who seeks to be elected.

(l) REGISTRATION – act of making a record of a person's qualifications to vote.

(m) CAMPAIGN – effort to gain votes for a candidate.

(n) TALLY – mark which is used to keep score when counting the votes.

(o) WRITE-IN VOTE – a vote cast for a candidate not appearing on the ballot but written on the ballot by the voter.

2. Have the boys and girls use each of the above election-related terms in a sentence.

B. Campaign Activities - - To help the boys and girls learn about the candidates in order to vote intelligently.

1. Have the boys and girls discuss words which describe:

   (a) how the candidates move about;

   (b) the sounds the candidates make;

   (c) how the candidates might feel when touched;

   (d) the sizes of the candidates.

2. Have the boys and girls discuss the ways each of the candidates might help man.

3. Using the information from Activities B-1 and B-2, encourage each pupil to compare the candidates and to select his or her favorite in each category. Stress the importance of knowing about each candidate before choosing a favorite.

4. Explain the purpose of campaigning to the children. Have the boys and girls divide into groups to form campaign committees for the candidates of their choice. Each committee may draw and cut out figures representing their candidates to wear as campaign buttons.

5. Have the children, or the campaign committees, make clay figures of their candidates to display in the classroom.

6. Duplicate the pictures of the candidates in the packet. Have the pupils color the pictures of the candidates of their choice, draw original pictures or make posters promoting their candidates. Hang these in the classroom until election day. On election day have the children remove all campaign materials. Point out that electioneering within the polling place on election day is against the law.

7. Allow each child to tell why he or she thinks his/her favorite is the best and to try to convince others to vote for the same candidate.

C. Voter Qualification Activities - - To acquaint the boys and girls with the concept of "voter qualifications."

1. Discuss voter qualifications for general elections (See Teacher's Background). Then encourage the children to decide the voter qualifications for their election, for example, schoolmates, classmates, teachers, and others.

2. Discuss the importance of knowing for sure that a person is qualified to vote in their election before being allowed to vote. Point out that registration serves this purpose.

3. Have the children decide what information would have to be known about each voter in their election before being allowed to vote. Suggest that this information be put on a card by each child as a registration card. These cards may be used during the election to check that each voter is qualified to vote.

4. Ask the children to determine the year in which they will be old enough to vote. Point out that voters must be at least 18 years old.

D. Voting Procedure Activities - - to prepare the boys and girls for voting.

1. Discuss with the pupils some of the voting methods they might have already used, such as the voice vote or a show of hands. Ask them to tell about times when they voted.

2. Using the voice vote method of electing described in the "Teacher's Background," have the boys and girls elect the Judges of Election.

3. With the help of the class decide the location of the voting area within the classroom. Stress the importance of voting in secret. Also point out the importance of placing the ballot box where it can be seen by everyone at all times.

4. Have the children make the signs to be used in and around the polling place on election day, such as "Vote Here," "Polling Place," and "Ballot Box."

5. Have the children make badges for the "Judges of Election" to be worn on election day.

II. ELECTION DAY ACTIVITIES

A. Preparation Activities - - to allow the children to assume responsibility for the conduct of the election.

1. Have the boys and girls help arrange the polling place.

2. Have the boys and girls hang the "Polling Place" sign and other signs in and around the polling place.

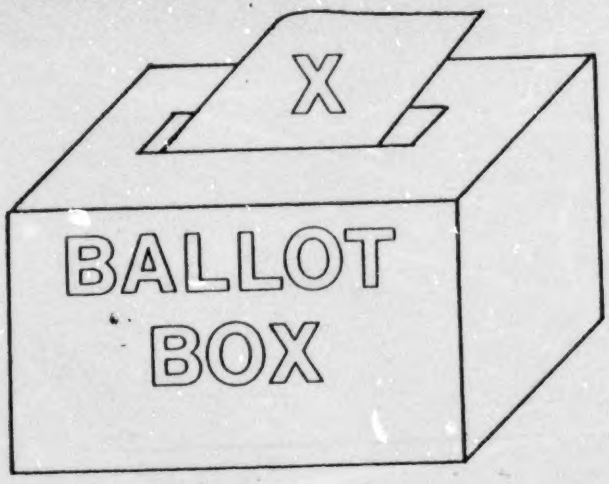
B. Reinforcement Activities - - to reinforce the children's election vocabulary and election knowledge.

1. Duplicate the enclosed crossword puzzle and other individual activities. Distribute these to the boys and girls to work on at their desks while the voting proceeds.

2. Have the children tell or write why voting is important.

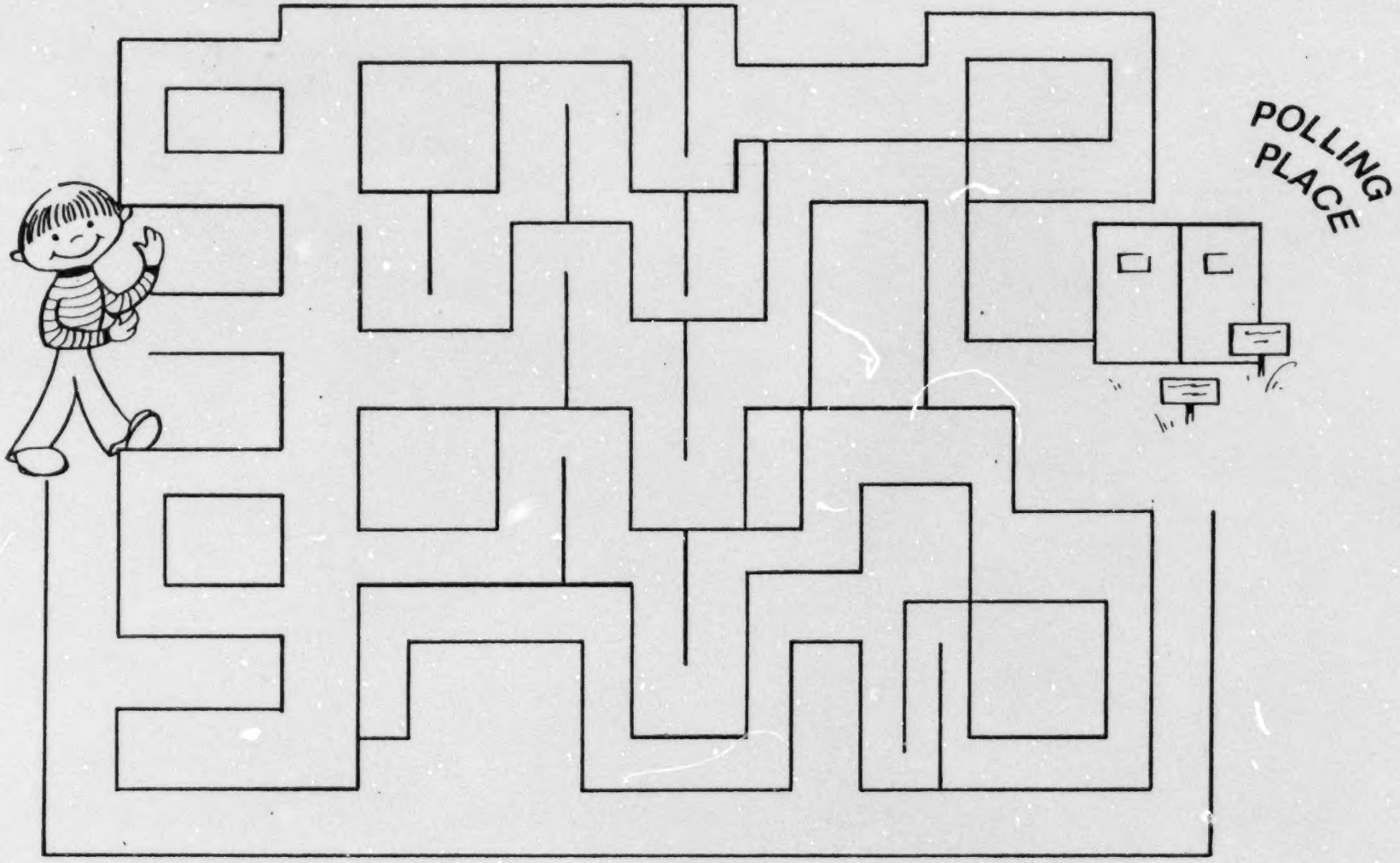
3. Encourage the boys and girls to discuss why secrecy in voting is important. Have them point out what steps were taken in their election to make certain that the voting was in secret.

CONNECT THE DOTS. . . .



BALLOT

BOX



FIND THE WAY TO THE POLLING PLACE!!

FIND THE WORDS

C V O T E A S Z

A O X P O L L S

S T T L O P D L

R E L E C T H N

C R M S H A C H

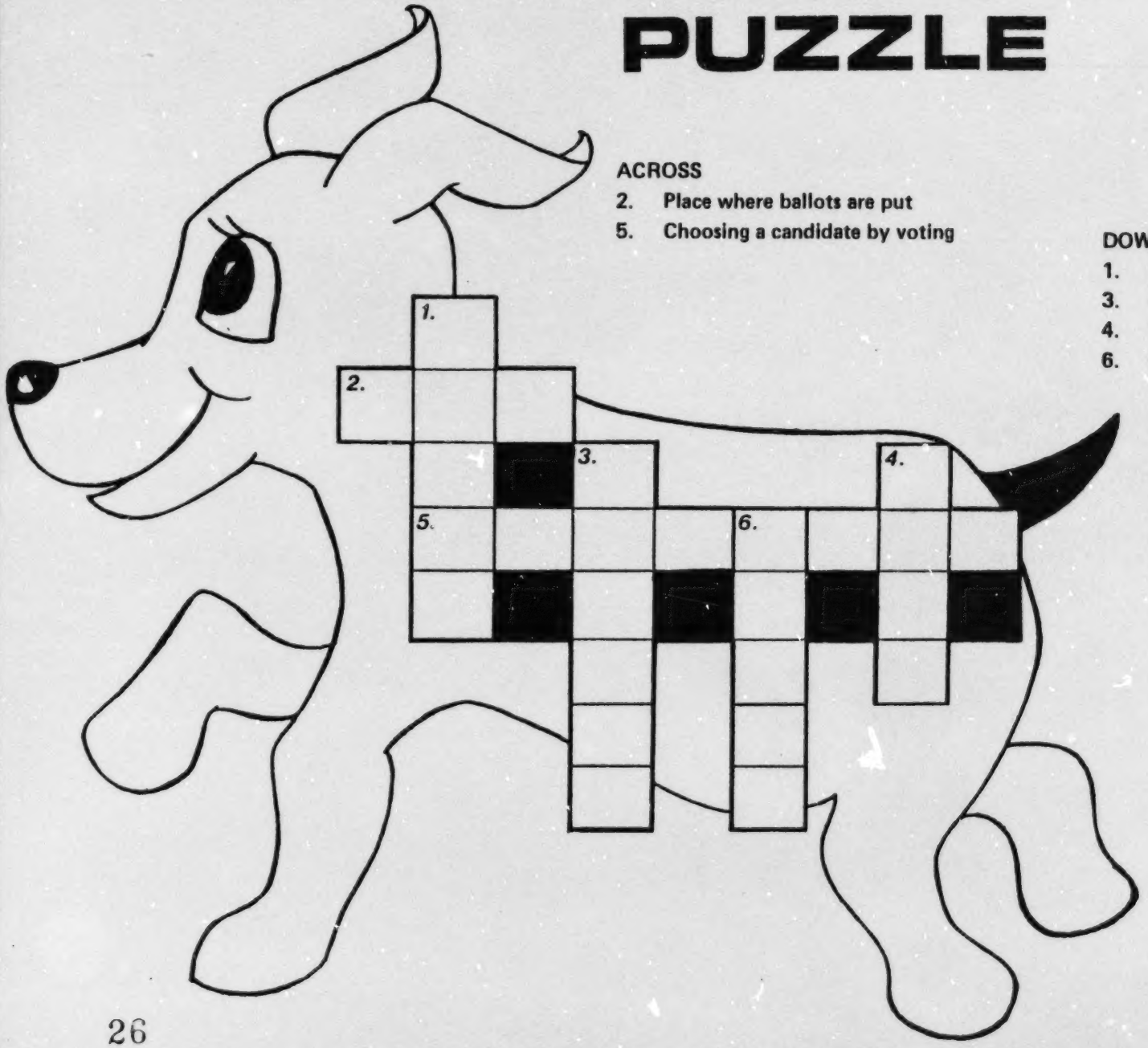
R T B A L L O T

E B O X B R C N

T B T C X M P Z

1. BALLOT *2. BOX* *3. ELECT* *4. POLLS* *5. VOTE*

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



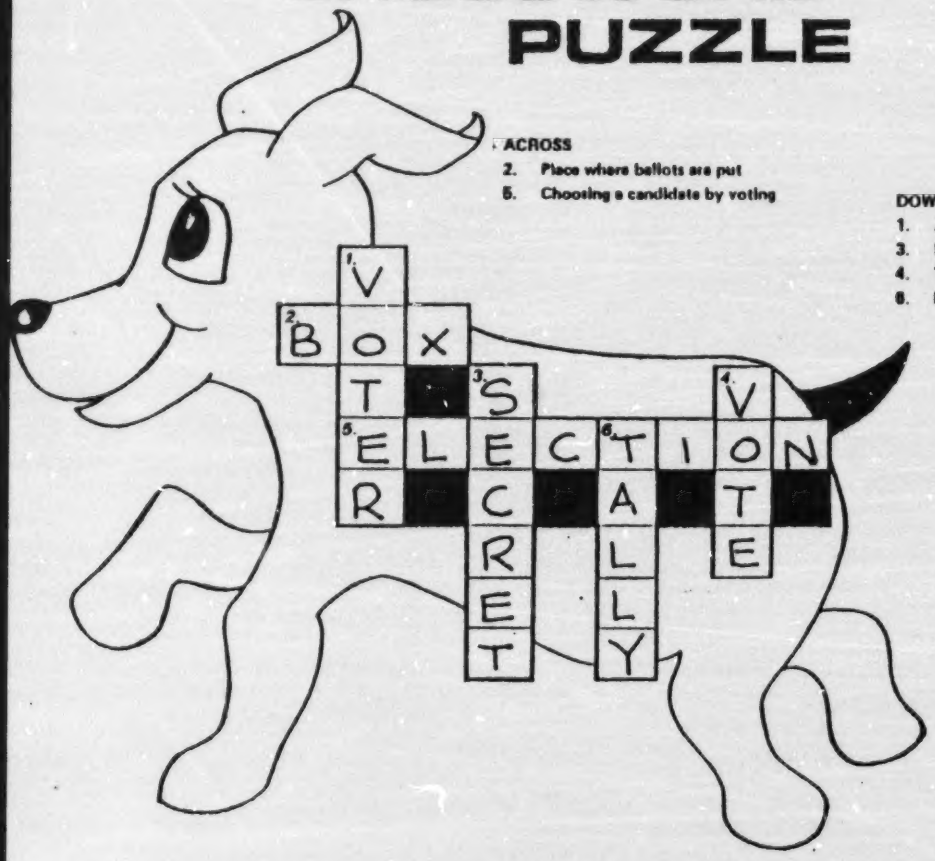
ACROSS

2. Place where ballots are put
5. Choosing a candidate by voting

DOWN

1. A person who votes
3. Ballots are marked in
4. To make a choice
6. Marks used in counting votes

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

2. Place where ballots are put
5. Choosing a candidate by voting

DOWN

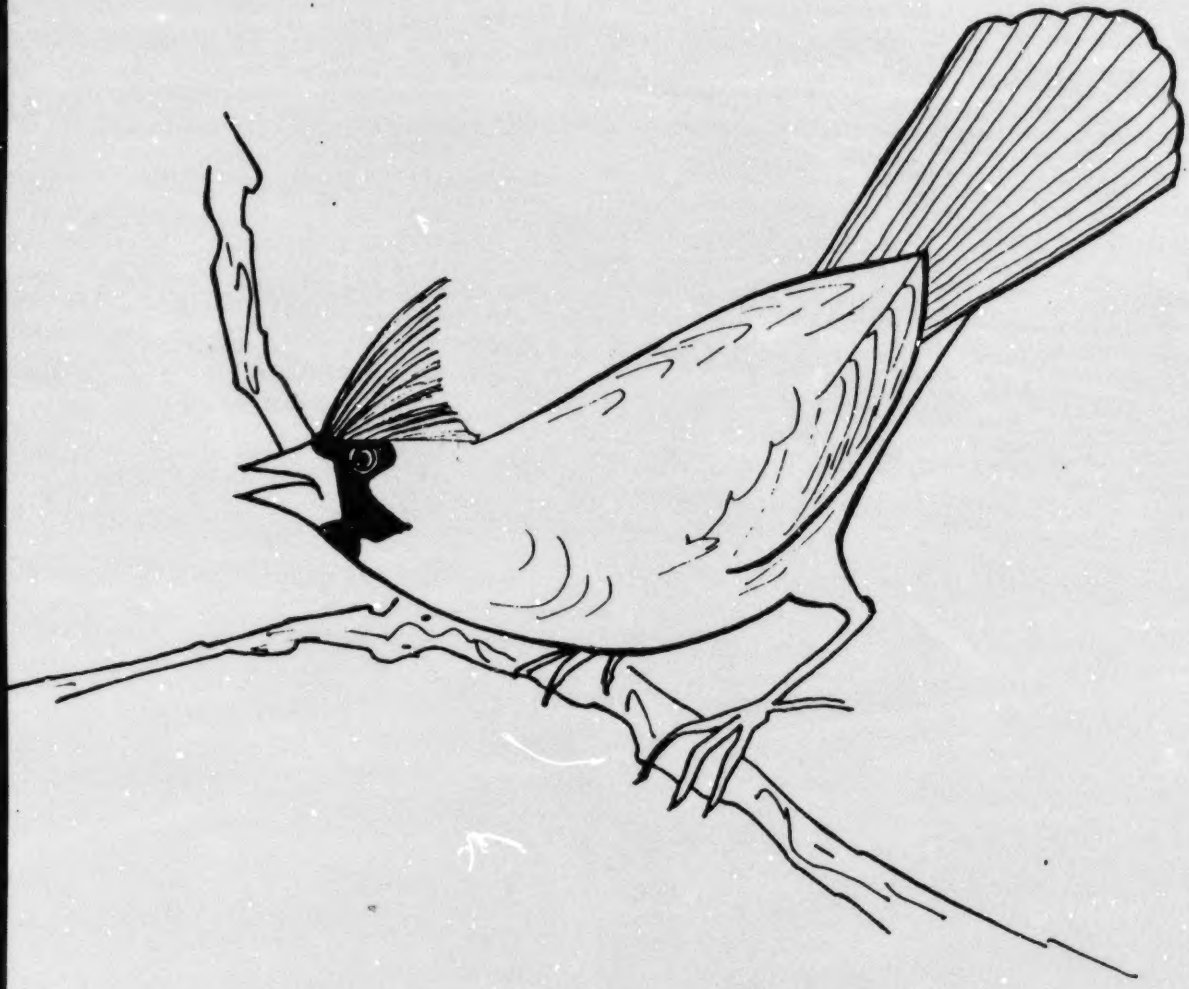
1. A person who votes
3. Ballots are marked in
4. To make a choice
6. Marks used in counting votes

ANSWER SHEET

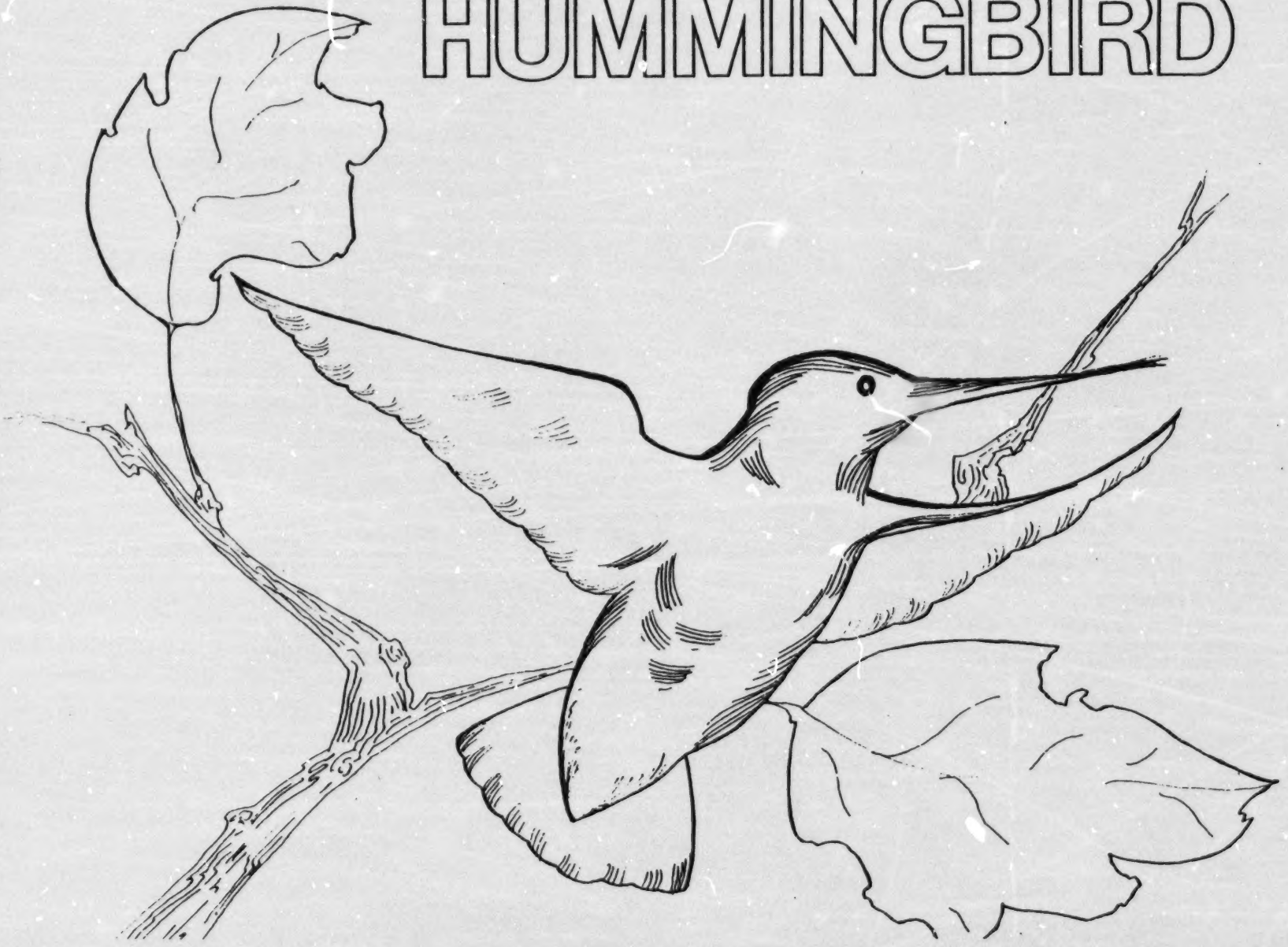
FIND THE WORDS

C	V	O	T	E	A	S	Z
A	O	X	P	O	L	L	S
S	T	T	L	O	P	D	L
R	E	L	E	C	T	H	N
C	R	M	S	H	A	C	H
R	T	B	A	L	L	O	T
E	B	O	X	B	R	C	N
T	B	T	C	X	M	P	Z

CARDINAL

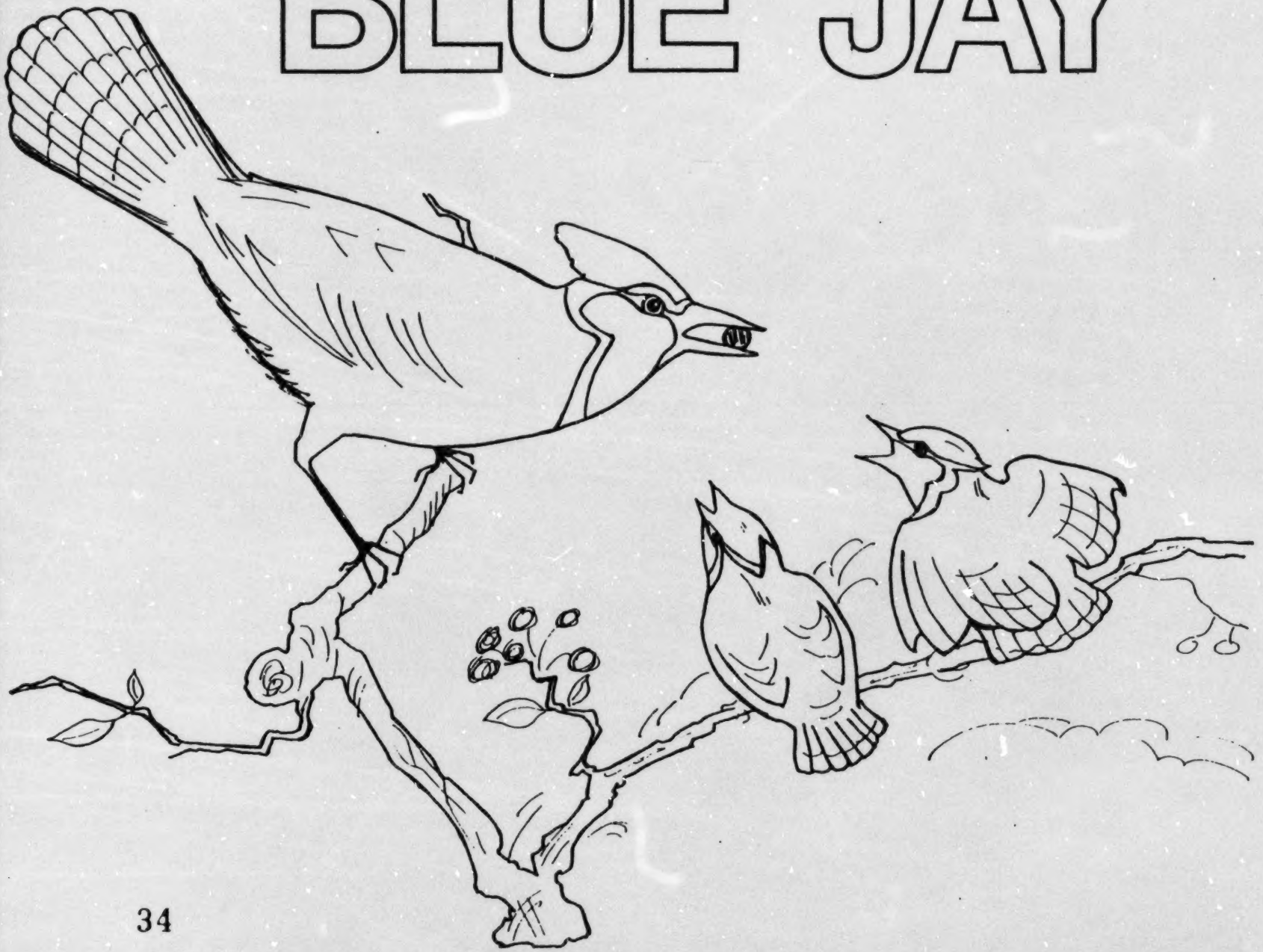


HUMMINGBIRD

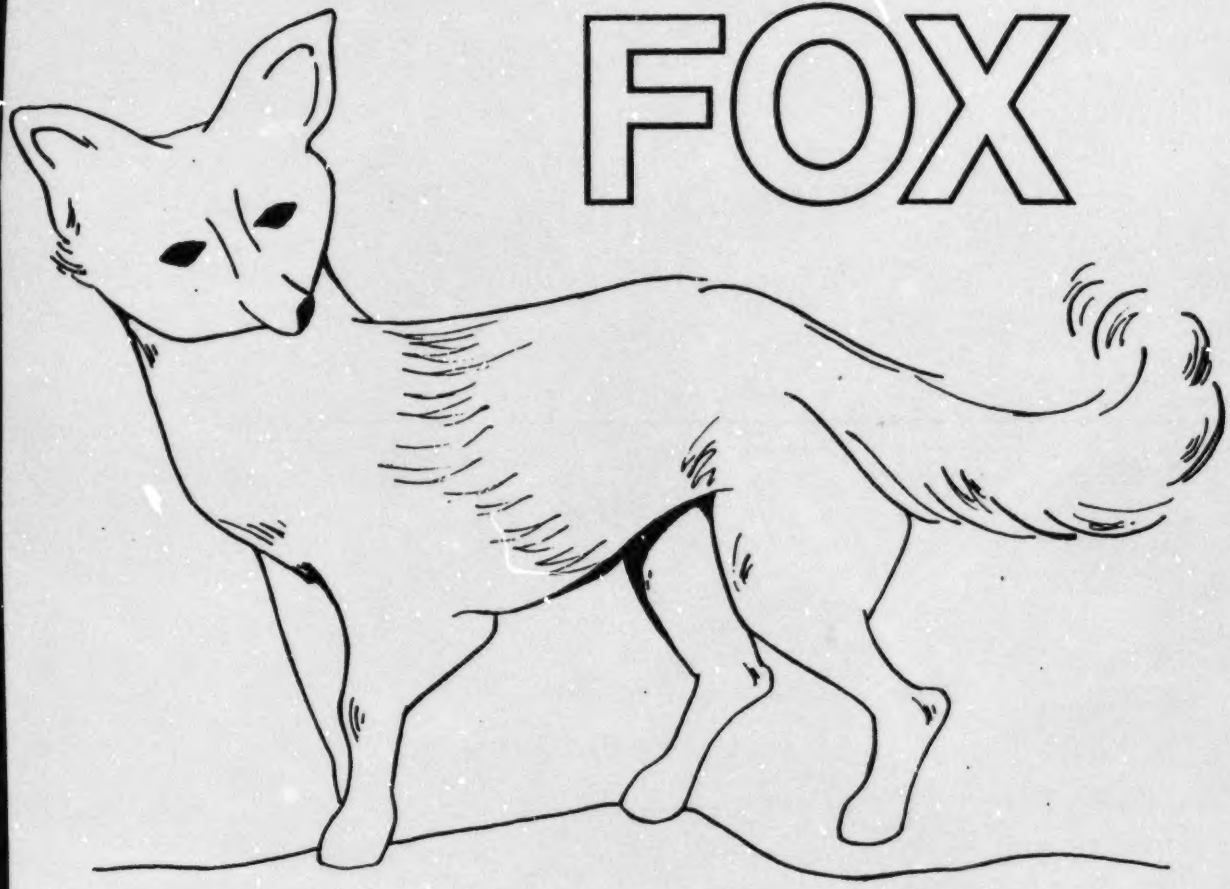


WOODPECKER

BLUE JAY

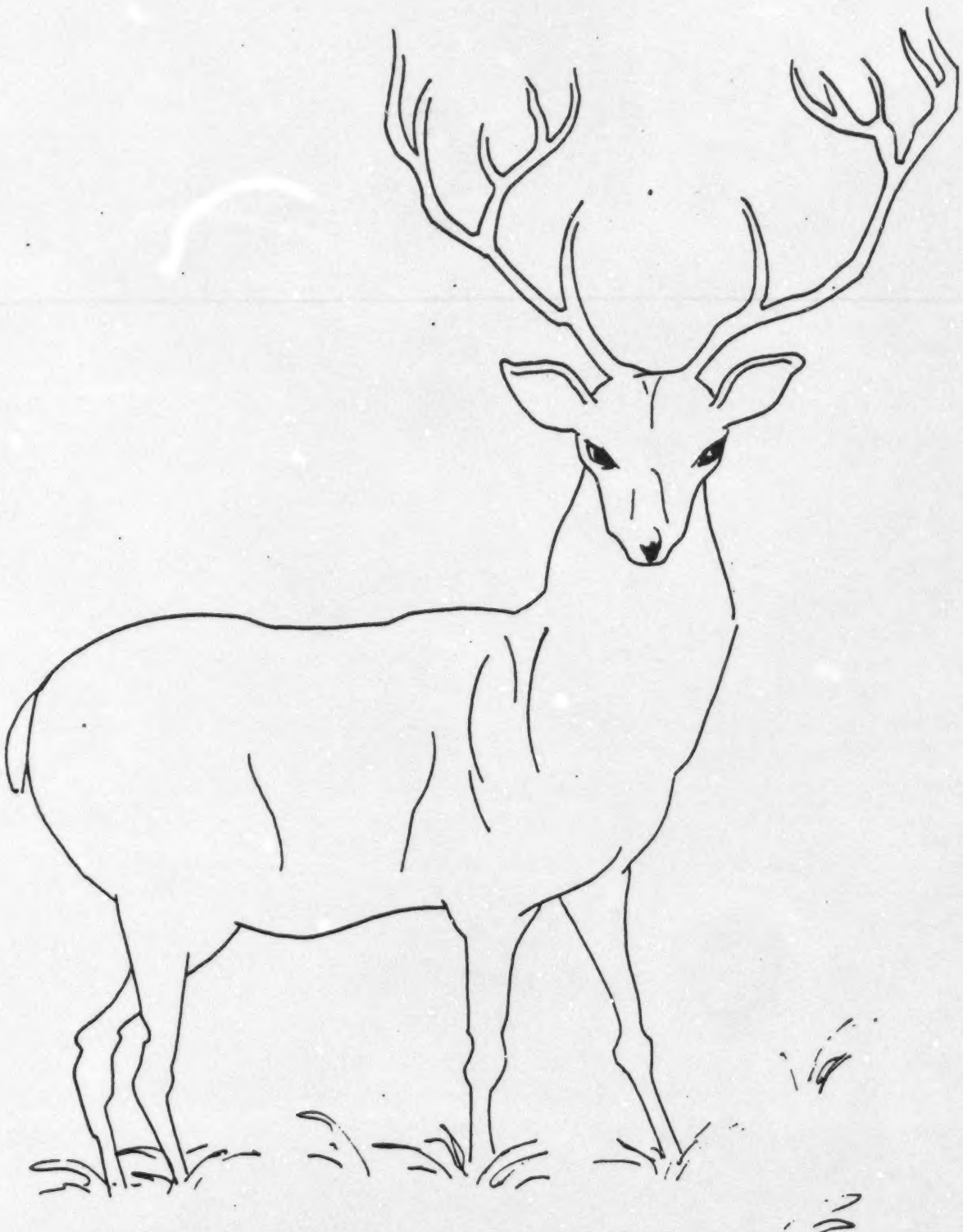


FOX

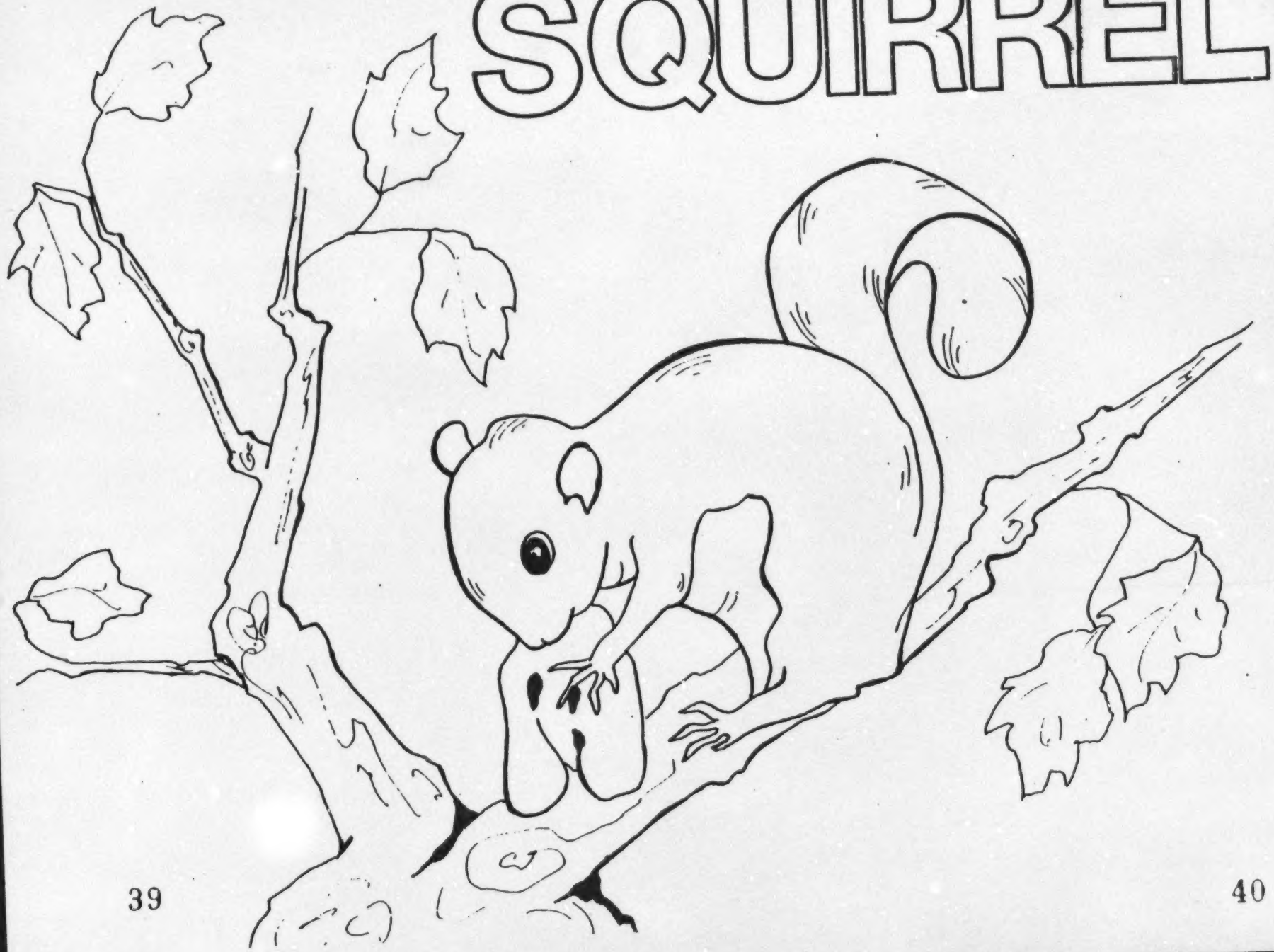


OPOSSUM

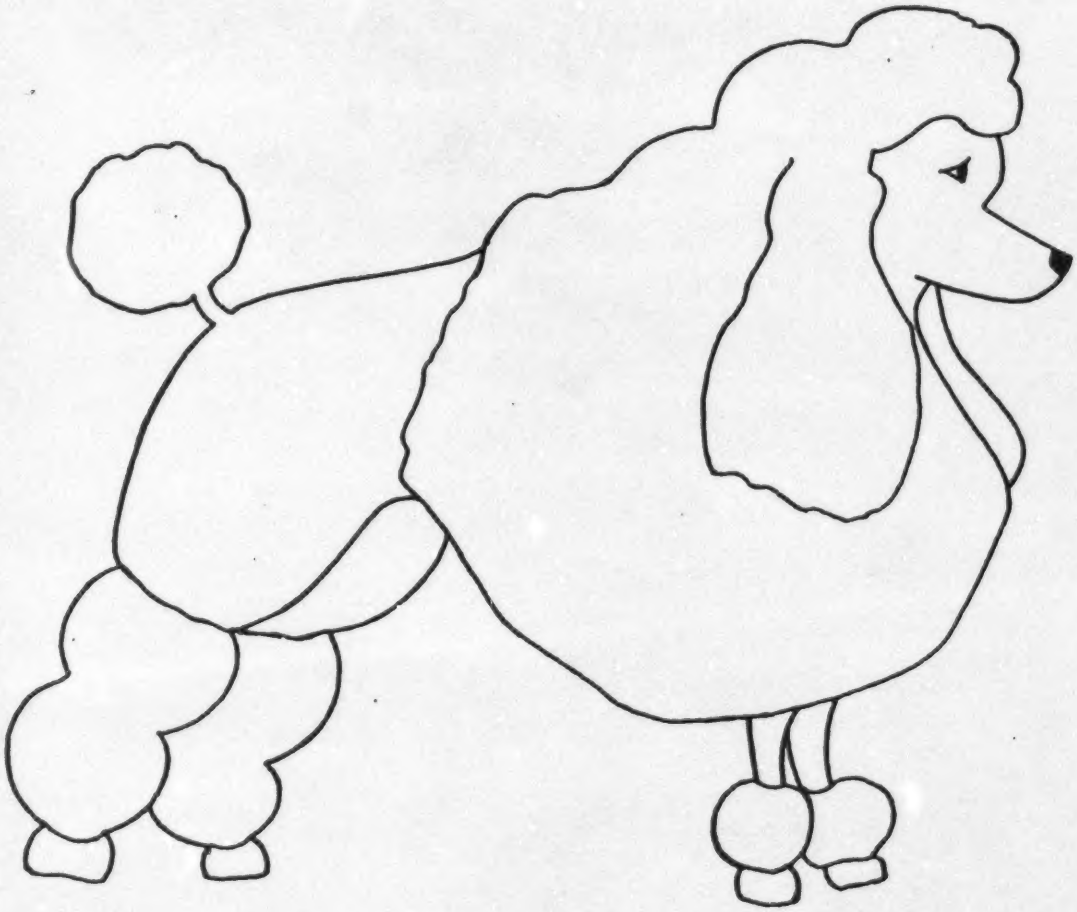
DEER



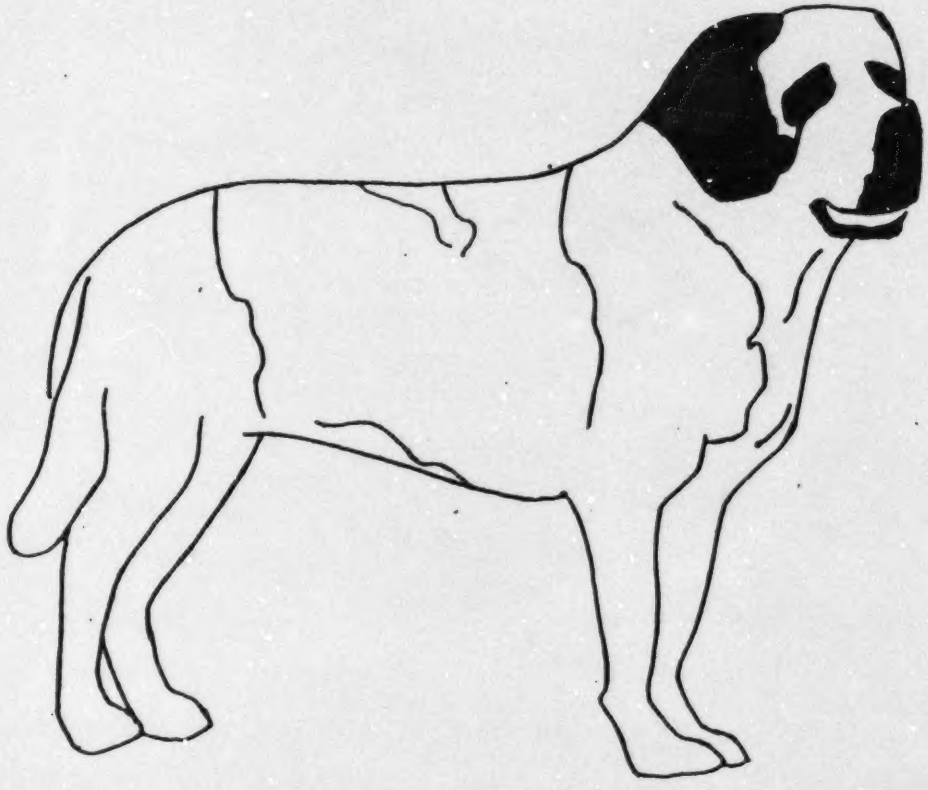
SQUIRREL



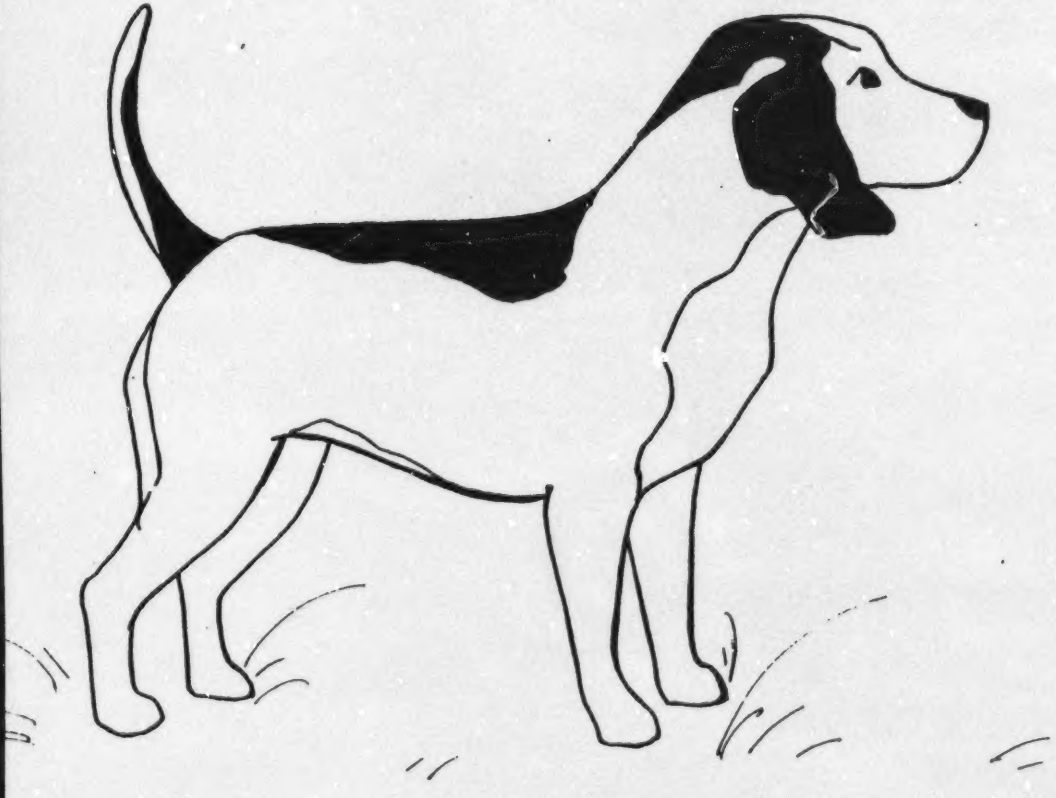
POODLE



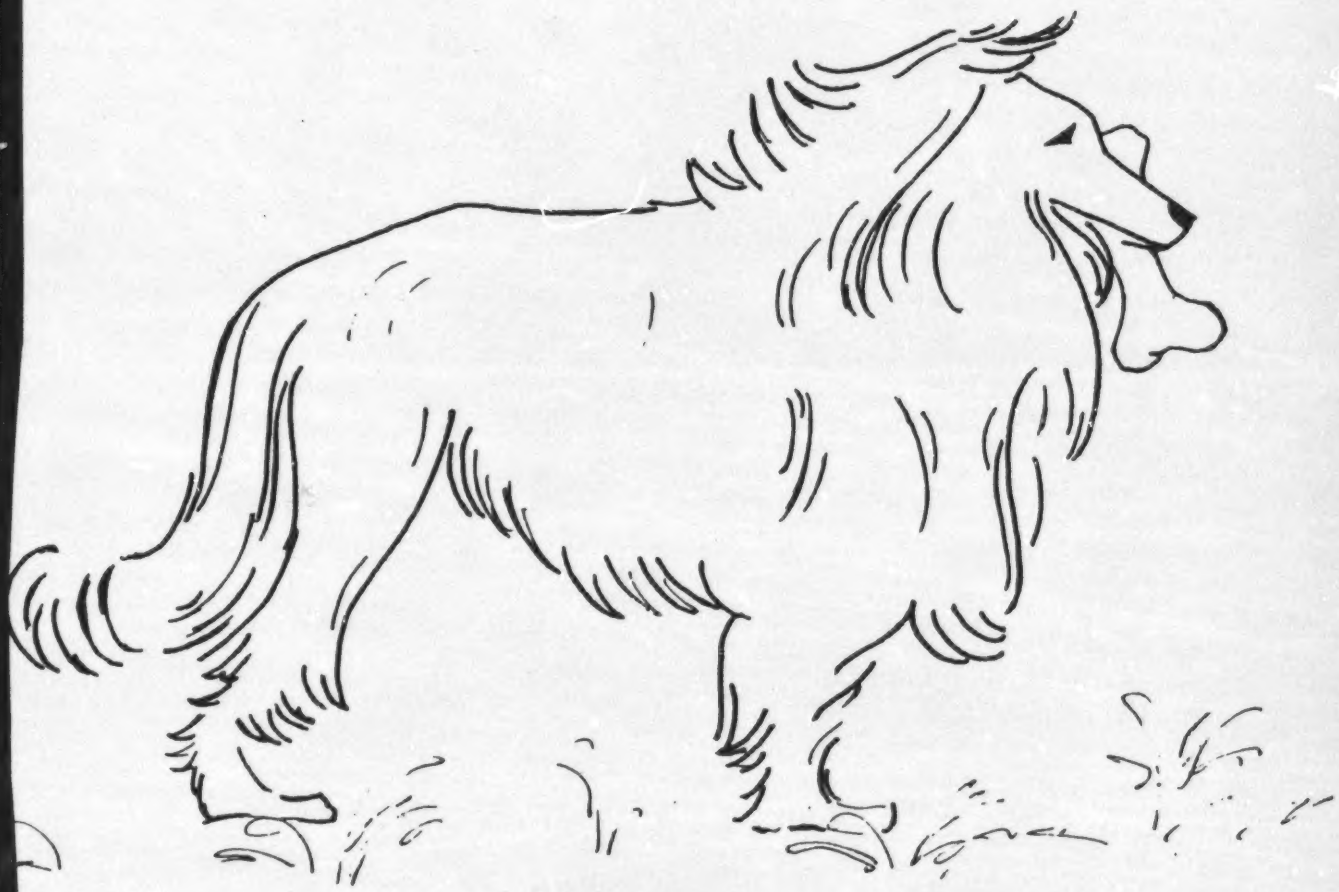
SAINT BERNARD



BEAGLE



COLLIE



VOTE HERE

POLLING PLACE

BALLOT BOX

BALLOT

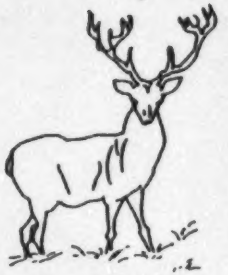
BIRD

(VOTE FOR 1)

- ☐ CARDINAL
- ☐ HUMMINGBIRD
- ☐ WOODPECKER
- ☐ BLUE JAY
- ☐ _____

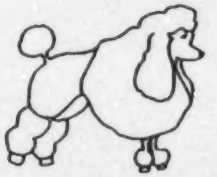
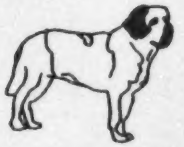
WILD ANIMAL

(VOTE FOR 1)

- ☐ FOX
- ☐ OPOSSUM
- ☐ DEER 
- ☐ SQUIRREL
- ☐ _____

DOG

(VOTE FOR 1)

- ☐ POODLE 
- ☐ SAINT BERNARD 
- ☐ BEAGLE
- ☐ COLLIE
- ☐ _____

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